



# The Art of Unboxing

When does the consumer experience start; with the product or the packaging?

# The Art of Unboxing

Jordan Gonzalez

As the saying goes, there's no unboxing quite like an Apple unboxing. Whether it's stark white or jet black, an Apple iPhone box sparks a level of excitement and an understanding that a beautiful sensory journey is about to begin. With an unbelievable focus on delivering an exceptional experience, Apple's obsession with the smallest details ensures its customers are satisfied every step of the way. Between the awe-inspiring iPhone, superior customer service, and the out-of-this-world packaging, they have secured a devoted, almost obsessive following; their products and packaging always create a statement.

The sensory appeal of packaging subconsciously attracts consumers, with about 65 per cent of consumers trying a new product simply because they were enticed by its packaging. A 2014 study, "Impact of Product Packaging in Consumers' Buying Behavior", claimed that "...the packaging is perceived to be part of the product and it can be difficult for consumers to separate the two (the concept of gestalt)." Apple displays the beautifully

designed iPhone like an art piece, giving its painstakingly engineered box the same attention to detail; the packaging and product are one in the customer's eyes.



Being a design-driven company, Apple elevated the bar on the unboxing experience to unseen heights. Their customers were given a zen-like experience, the exact opposite of the sensory overload seen on other brands' packaging. Adam Lashinksy's book "Inside Apple" states that a packaging designer was assigned to continuously open boxes looking for the perfect drag and friction; thus, creating an enjoyable unboxing experience. Before this, electronic equipment was packaged with corrugated cardboard and styrofoam then disposed of quickly. The Apple experience is very different; The iPhone's packaging is aesthetically clean. Their customers rarely throw away such a beautiful package, often having a collection of boxes sitting in a cupboard somewhere.

The original iPhone box was large by today's standards, but when the top was slid off, it revealed the iPhone with no other distractions; the accessories and instructions were hidden underneath. Steve Jobs believed the unboxing routine was a fundamental part of the customer experience. When launched in 2007, the

iPhone had approximately 200 patents to protect it and patents to protect the stunning box.



To preserve the environment for future generations, Apple endeavours to make the best products for the world, aiming to reduce its impact on climate change by adopting renewable energy sources. By 2020 Apple moved towards an even more minimalist, greener direction when packaging its products. The original iPhone box was relatively large, containing an overabundance of items, including a plastic tray that held the phone in position, a charging dock, stereo headphones, a power adapter, a charging cable, a user manual, and a user manual cleaning cloth. The charging dock was first to disappear, and subtle changes continued in their pursuit of perfection. They also decreased plastic by 84 per cent when they removed the plastic case of the EarPods and replaced it with an origami-like enclosure. The iPhone 12 was box was a sleek slimline design; there were no EarPods or power adapter, only the lightning to USB-C charging cable, sim card removal needle and a more petite user manual remained. The new reduced contents save material and reduce the load associated with transport.

#### References:

- Rambabu, L., & Porika, R. (2020). Packaging strategies: knowledge outlook on consumer buying behaviour. *Journal Of Industry - University Collaboration*, 2(2), 67-78. <https://doi.org/10.1108/jiuc-10-2019-0017>
- Mohebbi, B. (2014). The art of packaging: An investigation into the role of color in packaging, marketing, and branding. *International Journal Of Organizational Leadership*, 3(2), 92-102. <https://doi.org/10.33844/ijol.2014.60248>

- Bahirat, T. (2020). Design thinking is Apple's Success Mantra. Retrieved 3 October 2021, from <https://www.mygreatlearning.com/blog/design-thinking-is-apples-success-mantra/>
- Personalics. (2016). How packaging gives Apple's buyers a sensory experience that reinforces brand - Personalics. Retrieved 5 October 2021, from <https://www.personalics.com/2016/02/03/sensory-design-packaging/>.

The outcome of well-designed packaging is undeniable; it gives a brand more extensive reach than advertising because the sensory response is remembered: buying an elegant box with an Apple logo comes with a visual and passionate response – a sensory journey like no other.

# Packaging changes over time



Whats inside the box?	Whats inside the box?	Whats inside the box?	Whats inside the box?	Whats inside the box?
Plastic tray holding iPhone Charging dock Stereo headphones with 3.5mm jack Power adapter 30-pin to USB charging cable User manual with cleaning cloth	Plastic tray holding iPhone Stereo headphones with 3.5mm jack Power adapter 30-pin to USB charging cable User manual with cleaning cloth & SIM card removal needle	Plastic tray holding iPhone Stereo headphones with 3.5mm jack Power adapter 30-pin to USB charging cable User manual with SIM card removal needle	Plastic tray holding iPhone Earpods with a 3.5mm jack enclosed in plastic case Power adapter Lightning to USB charging cable User manual with SIM card removal needle	Plastic tray holding phone Earpods with a 3.5mm jack enclosed in plastic case Power adapter Lightning to USB charging cable User manual with SIM card removal needle



Whats inside the box?	Whats inside the box?	Whats inside the box?	Whats inside the box?	Whats inside the box?
Earpods with lightning cable connector Lightning to 3.5mm headphone jack adapter Power adapter Lightning connector charging cable User manual with SIM card removal needle	Earpods with lightning cable connector Lightning to 3.5mm headphone jack adapter Power adapter Lightning connector charging cable User manual with SIM card removal needle	Earpods with lightning cable connector Power adapter Lightning connector charging cable User manual with SIM card removal needle	Earpods with lightning cable connector Power adapter Lightning connector charging cable User manual with SIM card removal needle	Lightning to USB-C charging cable Smaller user manual with SIM card removal needle